



YOU ARE WHAT YOU TWEET: ANALYZING CELEBRITY CULTURE ON TWITTER

Sumit Malik¹, Dr. Tarjeet Sabharwal²

¹Officer Communications, Tata Trusts, New Delhi, India.

²Associate Professor, Delhi College of Arts & Commerce, University of Delhi.

ABSTRACT

Social media, most notably, opened its users to create and share content; connecting them in ways never before imagined. But it would also be unfair not to acknowledge the fact that the individual did not have a 'voice' while consuming the 'traditional' media. The internet, by offering a 'voice to every user' thus became a marked departure from its traditional counterparts.

This study investigates the creation of identity by micro-bloggers on social networking sites. It also examines whether there is an interplay between celebrities and online identity creation as a deliberative and sustained communicative. Offline identity of celebrities can be observed in several ways and through several dimensions. This study makes an attempt explore the different ways and deliberate efforts of communication that individuals and celebrities make to create an online identity and whether the online and offline identities synchronize and meet at any point. The frequency and output of tweets were analyzed for understanding the celebrity culture of famous personalities and brands.

It was inferred that identity was a process and not a product. The creative ways in which users are embracing the medium in totally new ways was observed. Moreover, it was also observed that celebrities used twitter to create and enhance their offline identity on this platform. It was also seen that the concept of 'celebrity and celebrity culture' too has undergone radical shift in its definition when considering the online space.

In conclusion, the results clearly suggest that online identity is, if not more, but equally expressive of the individual's offline identity.

KEY WORDS: Celebrity Culture, Social Networking Sites, Interactivity, Online Identity, Micro-blogging, Public Perception.

INTRODUCTION:

All media, ever since their inventions – from the newspaper to radio to television – brought with themselves a new range of possibilities. What internet mediated communication did was to take those possibilities multiple notches higher. The phrase 'new media' denotes a wide variety of recent developments in the fields of media and communications. It encompasses not only new forms of media delivery, but also new convergences between media technologies and new ways in which people use, and interact with, media texts. Fundamental to these trends has been the growing significance of digital technology in the production, storage and transmission of images, text, sound and data.

The ambit of interactivity has increased with digital technology. Digitally-based websites, games and TV services all allow for new, innovative ways for audiences to participate in, perhaps even take control and participate in the processes of media consumption. In itself, the character of the web is distinctly interactive, users creating their own 'trails' through cyberspace as they click through an infinite matrix of hypertext links.

Social media, opened its users to create and share content; connecting them in ways never before imagined. But it would also be unfair not to acknowledge the fact that the individual did not have a 'voice' while consuming the 'traditional' media. The radio phone-ins, letters and emails to the editor, and similar talk-back mechanisms for the TV- all stand testimony to this fact. But this possibility of 'a voice to the audience' was selective; only a select few and not everyone who was a user of a particular medium could voice her/himself.

The Online Identity Assembly theory argues that identities created should not be understood as linear or static. In an online space, the look, feel, perceived display, even location of an online identity can be altered, adjusted, expanded, or deleted at a moment's notice. Online identities need to be understood as continuously changing representations, never locked in one position, constantly in a state of assembly.

Awareness with respect to online communication is beginning to make its appearance the individuals and groups engaging in online communication are forming simultaneous multiple identities in newer ways. An individual user can have as many identities as s/he wishes, resulting in an individual user being a truly polysemic self, able to adjust in small or radical ways at any given time, both visually and textually. Ananda Mitra (2013) of the Wakeforest University calls Narrative bytes or Narbs. Social media systems allow individuals to create a discursive identity for themselves using different tools all of which function as narrative bits of information, or "narbs," which in unison create a composite identity of an individual.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

In the backdrop of the above literature on theories of identity and celebrity studies, it is important to review and understand the dynamics between the creation of identity and the use of social media by celebrities.

The Creation of an Online Identity: The scholarly work of professors at University of Nebraska, Omaha, argues that, online identities cannot be understood as linear or static. Online identities need to be understood as perpetually changing representations, never fixed in one position, and continually in a state of assembly. The premise for their work is that identity research within the communication literature has focused on specific characteristics of the medium (e.g., anonymity) and the effects of those characteristics on the outcomes of the communicative act rather than focusing on the communicative process of identity construction itself. In the backdrop of this, online identity assembly theory (OIA) is observed in two ways:

- 1) as a reaction to the limitation of current online identity research in the discipline of communication and
- 2) as a direction for the communication discipline to engage this developing area of study.

This work thus demonstrates how communication is uniquely placed to answer the question of "how do we create who we are within an online space?"

Celebrity Studies:

Graeme Turner argues that: Celebrity is a genre of representation and a discursive effect; it is a product traded by the promotions, publicity and media industries that produce these representations and their effects, and it is a cultural formation that has a societal role we can better understand. (Turner, 2004: 9)

Turner highlights three primary scholarly definitions: (1) celebrity as a way that individuals are represented and talked about; (2) a means by which a person is turned into a commodity; and (3) an aspect of culture which is constantly being re-inscribed and revised.

In spite of famous people representing an increasingly significant part of mass media, for many academics, they personify the trivial, dangerous decadence of American culture (Ewen, 1989; Lowenthal, 1961). It is perhaps, because of this perception only, that people who enjoy consuming celebrity culture have been pathologized, portrayed as miserable or lonely, or seen as cultural dupes (Feasey, 2008; Jensen, 1992). Nevertheless, celebrity images are culturally pervasive; they have become part of our day-to-day lives (Turner, 2004: 17) and part of the raw material through which we construct identities and engage in public dis-

course (Feasey, 2008; Gamson, 1994).

Furthermore, fandom has become a subject of study in its own right (Baym, 2000; Jenkins, 1992, 2006b; Boyd, 2011). As Danah boyd puts it, celebrity can now be practiced by a greater number of people using a variety of affiliative techniques; and constructing an image of self that can be easily consumed by others.

Formulation of the problem:

The creation of identity whether online or indicates an interplay between celebrities and online identity creation as a deliberative and sustained communicative offline can be observed in several ways and through several dimensions. However, for the present purpose the difference the regular output of tweets and their nature makes in the creation of online identity is emphasised.

The review of literature suggests that online communication may not work as an independent variable in creating a positive identity of the celebrity; on the contrary, the process can be found to be both-sided and mutual. Tweeples must not be considered as totally passive and the heterogeneity within tweeples in terms of age, sex, socio economic status, background and culture may be quite prominent in the whole process- what is known as 'context collapse'. Today, social media have contributed significantly to creating of the 'self' on online mediums. But we lack any studies to examine twitter specifically in creation of online identity whether the nature of tweets contributes towards the creation of nature of identity needs to be explored.

Additionally, there are some important gaps in the existing theoretical understanding regarding the perception of identities of celebrities among tweeples and the present study addresses itself to these.

HYPOTHESIS:

The study hypothesized the following:

1. "The tweets of a celebrity have a profound effect on the process of formation of their online identity as well as the public's perception of their celebrity status."
2. "Twitter acts as an extension to the fame already enjoyed by the conventionally famous celebrities."

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To apply (& thus test the efficacy of) the OIA theory to the Twitter platform.
2. To study the background of the celebrity in terms of their specialization of art.
3. To inspect the authorship of celebrity accounts.
4. To examine celebrity-fan interaction in terms of conventions of the Twitter medium has to offer, namely:
 - (a) Retweets
 - (b) @replies
 - (c) Regular Tweets
5. To analyze the content of the tweets and hence, the relation between the nature of the tweets and the offline perception of personality of the celebrity.

A pilot study was conducted to find out the consumption of various social media platforms by the youth.

It was observed that:

- (a) Most teens spend over three hours of the day consuming and creating content on the internet. Social Networking Sites (SNS) for the major chunk of it.

Facebook was the most preferred SNS. Twitter comes second, while Google+ gets the last position. It is interesting to note that sites such as Instagram are being used as utilities to these sites as well are creating an ecosystem of their own. Another interesting finding was that newer sites/apps such as Vine and Snap Chat, overthrew the internet search engine giant Google, by being first preferred SNS for over 13% of the student:

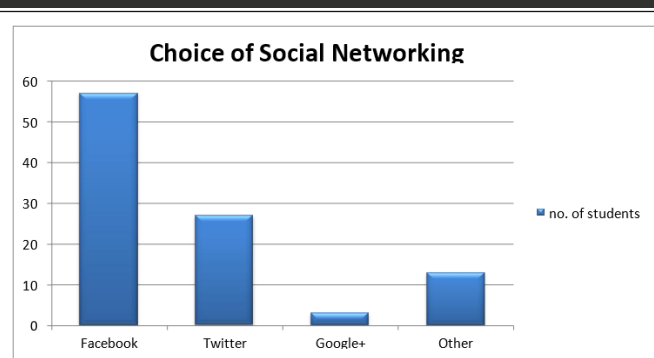


Figure 1: Preferred choice of Social Networking Sites

Twitter: As a social networking site

The microblogging site Twitter lets people post quick updates, or 'tweets', to a network of followers. Twitter asks participants 'What's happening?' resulting in a constantly-updated stream of short messages ranging from the mundane to breaking news, shared links, and thoughts on life. In Twitter's directed model of friendship, users choose others to 'follow' in their stream, and each user has his or her own group of 'followers'. Tweets can be posted and read from the web, SMS, or third-party clients for desktop computers, smartphones, and other devices. This integration allows for instant postings of photos, on-the-ground reports, and quick replies to other users, instant postings of photos, on-the-ground reports, and quick replies to other users.

What people do on Twitter varies tremendously. Some use the service to communicate with close friends, attract attention, or seek the attention of celebrities like Justin Bieber (Marwick & boyd, 2011). Others use the service to track news, share information, and offer links. Twitter has been used for a host of news-related events, including serving as a backchannel to American TV political debates (Shamma, Kennedy, & Churchill, 2009), a site for coordination in emergency events (Hughes & Palen, 2009; Sutton, Palen, & Shklovski, 2008), and a space for making sense of emergent news events (Yardi & boyd, 2010). While Twitter can be used as a broadcast medium, the dialogic nature of Twitter and its ability to facilitate conversation has contributed substantially to its popularity. This popularity has contributed to media fascination with the site.

METHODOLOGY:

Most of the descriptive studies on identity formation lay a substantial focus on describing the phenomena of identity as a communicative process rather than a product. In the present study, the research questions lay emphasis on understanding the process of identity (re)creation through many dimensions. To understand the basic underlying assumptions on identity creation, the researcher adopted the following method to address the issue under study.

Method of Study:

The study proposes to analyze the problem through quantitative as well as quantitative techniques. The study can broadly be classified into three components: firstly, it examines at the very process of identity formation; next, it analyzes celebrity practice; and finally, it measures whether or not there is a concurrence between online and offline identity.

The content analysis design was employed to analyse the tweets of celebrities under study. Further, the online and offline perception of identity of celebrities was analysed through a survey. An open-ended questionnaire was administered personally for getting responses for the latter.

Identity formation in Online Space:

Research Design:

The basic approach used in this research is the analytical approach since one of the aim of this study is to examine the process of identity formation in terms of the improvements or developments that have taken place in the communication scholarship.

Analyzing Celebrity Practice:

Sampling Techniques:

The population for this study is the comprehensive list prepared by the researcher for the purpose of this study. The list was prepared using various accredited and verified lists from various organisations, websites, news reports and public interviewing. The data sources include, the 1000 most-followed Twitter accounts & most followed celebrity tweeters in Delhi & Mumbai (as measured by Twittercounter.com), the Top Indian politicians on Twitter report (Economic Times), and Top Indian Celebrities on Twitter (the TIME magazine report).

This research categorizes various celebrities on twitter categories in terms of their background and/or specialization of their art field. Nine broad heterogeneous categories were classified. They were:

1. Politics

2. Bollywood Actors
3. Writers
4. Non famous
5. IT Professor
6. Art & Music
7. Sports
8. Columnist
9. Brands

From these 9 categories, five categories were selected from these broad categories through the method of simple random sampling. The five categories selected through this method were:

1. Politics
2. Writers/columnist
3. Bollywood Actors
4. Non- famous
5. Brands

From these five categories, one celebrity from each was further selected through the technique of simple random sampling. The celebrities finally chosen for analyses through a multi-stage sampling process were:

1. Shashi Tharoor – Politics
2. Priyanka Chopra – Bollywood
3. Shobha De – Columnist
4. Ramesh – Non Famous
5. Satya Paul – Brands

The content analysis design:

To examine the content of tweets of celebrities the researcher defined the various propositions for this study in the following manner:

1. **Universe:** the tweets of all celebrities under study ever since they joined twitter formulated the universe.
2. **Population:** the population for this study was defined as all the tweets of all the celebrities under study, during the time period i.e., 1st January 2014 to 31st March 2014.
3. **Sample size:** Since the study proposed to analyze the tweets of only five celebrities, the entire population was considered as sample size. Therefore, all the tweets of the five celebrities under study formed the sample.

The list included actors, musicians, technologists, politicians, reality television stars, and so forth for a total of 100 individuals; the remaining accounts were media, companies, and organizations. The researcher closely monitored accounts of famous people and their fans, and engaged in a deep qualitative analysis of 5 chosen Twitter accounts mentioned above that were identified as representative types of well-known actors, musicians, politicians/pundits, and technologists.

Part III: Finding orders, patterns and general themes - online and offline identity.

The semantic differential scale:

To measure the perception of the identity of celebrities both online & offline, the semantic differential scale was used. A unique set of bipolar adjectives were developed for each particular measurement situation.

Online Survey: Population: The followers of all the celebrities on twitter formulate the population.

Sample Size: A sample of 10 respondents i.e. 10 followers of each celebrity were chosen for conducting the survey. In all, 50 online respondents formed the sample size.

Sampling technique: The respondents were chosen in the following manner: each celebrity was contacted online and a request was made to study their online identity. An open – ended questionnaire was sent to each celebrity and it was tagged to the followers. The first ten responses were chosen as the sample units.

Offline Survey:

To study the offline perception of celebrities the non- probability sampling technique was adopted. Since their study was conducted in Delhi, the researcher decided to intercept people at cinema halls, malls, shopping centres, metro stations and major bus stops. Ten respondents from each of these places were cho-

sen randomly. A sample size of 50 respondents was chosen for the offline survey. An open – ended questionnaire was administered to each of the respondents.

Public Identity and the Web:

Previous research has focused on specific characteristics of the medium (e.g., anonymity) and the effects of those characteristics on the outcomes of the communicative act rather than focusing on the communicative process of identity construction itself. The researcher uses the recently developed online identity assembly theory (OIA) to explain the dynamics of online identity (re)creation as well as to analyze the users (mostly celebrities) of the Twitter platform.

To explain this limitation, a critique of identity research developed by communication scholars is provided. OIA is then applied to the Twitter profile construction process. This work will illustrate how communication is uniquely placed to answer the question of “how do we create who we are within an online space?”

Online identity construction stems from the broader question of “what is an identity?” Anderson (1996) defines identity as “a sense of the unified self that exists across time and situation, as well as the constellation of characteristics and performances that manifest the self in meaningful action”.

Identity is not only constructed innately but is also developed through enactment, Hecht's second frame. Identities are enacted through the social construction and interchange that exists within our day-to-day lives. As a communicative act, identity may “be expressed as part of a message or may be the central feature of the message, and messages may express more than one identity” (1993, p. 79). Online identities are interconnected nodes within a wide array of identities and the realities those identities construct.

Performing Celebrity on Twitter:

Just as some public genres of social media, Twitter requires celebrity practitioners to negotiate a complicated social environment where fans, famous people, and intermediaries such as gossip columnists co-exist. These multiple audiences complicate self-presentation, since people present identity differently based on context. Erving Goffman's 1959 work *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* suggested that people, like actors, navigate 'frontstage' and 'backstage' areas in any given social situation.

Very famous people constantly navigate complex identity performances. The ostensible disconnect between a famous person's public persona and 'authentic' self is fueled by tabloid magazines, paparazzi photos, and gossip columns that purport to reveal what a particular starlet is 'really' like.

While it is accepted that the practice of celebrity involves strategically managed self- disclosure, we should not be so quick to judge the closeness created by Twitter as false and second-best. First, Twitter provides the possibility of real interaction with the highly followed person, in the form of a direct message or @reply. Second, the 'life streaming' function of Twitter encourages 'digital intimacy' (C Thompson, 2008).

On Twitter, performative intimacy is practiced by posting personal pictures and videos, addressing rumors, and sharing personal information. Picture-hosting services, such as YFrog and Twitpic, allow users directly to post camera phone pictures to Twitter.

DATA ANALYSIS:

Case Study #1

Shashi Tharoor- India's 'Minister Twitter'

Shashi Tharoor joined Twitter in 2009 and has been the most followed politician until recently when Modi took over this title.

Some of his tweets have been on the mosquito menace in Kochi (If mosquitoes had a vote I'd win every election in Kochi! Another near-sleepless night in this otherwise lovely city) and on corruption (I will not practice or condone corruption, but fighting it is not my principal job)

While Tharoor might be the Minister Tweeter (as Indian media has dubbed him) in India, his volatile career has included three highly publicized marriages, and divorces, tweet- based controversies, and the media-dubbed 'mysterious' suicide of his last wife- Sunanda Pushkar Tharoor.

Followers know that Tharoor uses Twitter to communicate directly with friends and fans, meaning he may potentially respond to them. As a result, fans directly ask for responses:

@CongressLSR: @ShashiTharoor Sir LSR college is going to host GENDERKNOWLEDGE academic @CongressLSR tomorrow. Pls retweet! #Change

Tharoor responded with a retweet.

Receiving a message from a highly followed individual is a status symbol in itself. This is also a public performance of access. Users tweet to Tharoor not only to feel a sense of connection with him, but also to publicly acknowledge the lack of distance between themselves and the politician. For Shashi Tharoor and

his fans, Twitter seems to be about the perception of availability and fan access.

But Shashi in his brilliant witty manner addresses even the gravest of allegations in the best possible manner.

Tharoor also tweets frequently about and to his fellow Party-mates. He went on record to say that "I have been able to provide them (P. Chidambaram & Sam Pitroda) a larger audience by simply retweeting them", and that he considers himself to be "duty-bound as well as somebody happy to do it in order to help amplify the party's voice".

Case Study #2

Priyanka Chopra: Celebrity Relationships with Celebrities

Celebrity practitioners also interact with other famous people on Twitter, creating revealing performances of what appear to be intimate interactions. Truly private interactions between famous people, with no public audience, are invisible to fans. Highly publicized romantic relationships and friendships covered by gossip magazines create the illusion of insider access, but are still public. Celebrities must constantly shift between performing their stage persona, concealing or revealing personal information, and creating intimacy and authentic self-presentation for the benefit of their fans. At times, it becomes difficult to discern what is performance and what is 'real'; this is precisely the kind of juxtaposition that fans love.

For example:

OQSpot: Who's the 'gunda' in #Gunday? Certainly not @RanveerOfficial or Arjun. Its @priyankachopra. She bullied them silly :)

Priyankachopra: @OQSpot u r too funny Omar!! I'm hardly a bully! I'm just a girl!!!:) (wink wink)

OQSpot: @priyankachopra Hahaha. Yeah. Girls with one arm-twisting technique & one lowered eyelash. Throw in your wit! Kaboom! You got your bully :P Priyankachopra: @OQSpot hahahaha

Her tweets can be viewed as strategic frontstage performances. It's irrelevant whether or not Priyanka and Omar Qureshi actually are that good friends, since the frequency and emotional tone of the messages mark them as performative – Priyanka and Omar want their fans to know that they are friends. Notably, there are no interactions between Priyanka and Omar on Twitter. This creates the possibility that the performances are not entirely false; instead, they may be a self-conscious, exaggeratedly ideal view of friendship.

The Omar-Priyanka tweet-exchange reveals that reading conversations as performative or real is neither neat nor easy. Celebrity is practiced through scripted attempts to give backstage access. But just as actually getting backstage at a rock show does not provide true access to the band, neither does reading tweets provide insider access. The performance of celebrities interacting with no thought of fans, press, or managers on Twitter is actually managed interaction that creates the perception of intimacy.

Case Study #3

Shobhaa De: The Gossip Queen

The gossip columnist, a perennial fixture in mass media, has gained a new importance as a result of the explosion in tabloid journalism, paparazzi, and celebrity websites. The gossip columnist has traditionally provided the fan with 'insider' access to celebrities, thereby giving a sense of the backstage environment. Gossip columnists functioned as a middleman between celebrities, who were traditionally managed and protected, and fans, whose access to celebrities had to be brokered.

However, in the past the gossip column was highly managed, with carefully chosen and orchestrated stories planted to drum up publicity. Shobhaa De, built a large following by posting sarcasm and criticism of celebrities. De is open about her desire to be part of the world she covers, and tweets and posts pictures of herself hobnobbing with the very people she used to condemn. Gossip bloggers like De revel in posting satires, and some others in posting topless photos, unverified rumors, public outing of gay celebrities, and other unauthorized snippets of information- in short, commenting on everything possible. De trolls Twitter for juicy bits of gossip, responding indiscriminately to her fans and to celebrities. Her tweets, manage to be both sycophantic and abrasive. But the question is what function does she serve as a middleman when celebrities are directly interacting with fans?

The following tweets were sent by De on Valentines day:

DeShobhaa: My V-Day treat? 'Gunday'. It had better be fun. Or else! Watch this space!!!!

priyankachopra: @DeShobhaa shobha ma'am now even I'm worried.. Haha.. Happy valentines day.. Hope u love it...

The conversation between De and Priyanka appears to be public in an entirely different way. De tweets about the film starring Priyanka, but neither does she tag

her or any other member, nor does she hashtag the movie; but rather sends out a tweet with a warning undertone, in a way clearly visible to her audience, primarily readers of her blog. She is performing as an insider, demonstrating access. Priyanka may criticize De, but she @replies to her comments.

Gossip and small talk perform a grooming function in human societies. People check in with each other and trade pleasantries and tidbits about current events, mutual acquaintances, or television shows (Donath, 2007; Dunbar, 1996). The publicly accessible back-and-forth small talk that DE engages in with famous individuals is a form of performed social grooming:

Hi @MissMalini Ha ha ha! Better to have aggressive, honest opinions than to join the ranks of P.R. journos. her's no substitute for the truth

hi @MissMalini @cityslicker_me

The next book is happening inside my head right now. Waiting for my head to explode

Hey @MissMalini @MillsandBoon I used to be hooked as a school girl. At some point I grew up! Damn!

Her liminal, outsider status is reinforced by Twitter users, who do not treat her with the awe appropriate for a famous actor or musician, but as a regular person who should not attempt to rise above her status. While to some people, De successfully performs celebrity – 'celebrity', after all, is relative – her in-between status requires careful management.

Case Study #4

Ramesh Srivats

An alumnus of IIT-Madras and IIM-Ahmedabad, Ramesh Srivats may be a serial entrepreneur, but he is more popular for his witty one-liners on Twitter. He runs TenTenTen, a company that creates web and mobile apps that help 'cool brands connect with cool customers' Twitter bio: Armchair thinker, excessive drinker, occasional writer, wants to be lighter.

Famous Tweet: Two weapons against corruption: Lokpal and Chappal

Ramesh Srivats is a Twitter superstar. His incisive humor and consistent ability to keep a pulse on what engages the digital population has helped him amass a large following and earned him accolades such as being crowned the 2012 GQ Digital Man of the Year.

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A selection of his tweets is as follows followed by an analysis.

Rahul Gandhi vs Smriti Irani in Amethi. Beta vs Bahu.

Hey people, stop throwing ink at Arvind Kejriwal. It's India "Inc" that he complains about.

Happy Birthday Twitter. 8 years old uh? In 5 years, you can join Facebook.

He's talking about his mom and himself? RT @firstpostin Rahul Gandhi: We will give opportunities to women and youth in our party.

Does he get 3 lifelines also? RT @ndtv We will go to Narendra Modi's residence now and ask him 16 questions: Arvind Kejriwal.

All his tweets constitute just part of what this man tweets. His average tweet rate is 70-80 tweets per day. Also, the promptness of the responses to @mentions and @replies have contributed to his popularity. An 'ahem', 'hehe', or a 'ROFL' would more often than not form a part of the reply or the quoted tweet.

Ramesh's tweets make it into the newspaper on a regular basis when the media publish articles about what the "Twitterati" have to say are published.

Some noteworthy observations from people like Srivats and others who practice micro-celebrity are as follows:

Twitter has raised a smart brood of commentators who go from politics to politics to pop culture and back, trailed by a few thousand followers. Neither netas nor abhinetas, they are rabble-rousers and opinion-makers in their own right.

These new stars on the media horizon, explains Sunil Abraham, executive director, Centre for Internet and Society, "provide information, comments, and

a sense of humour and cynicism that is missing from mainstream media". Again, on this turf, the threshold for entry is much lower. "Unlike TV," Abraham elaborates, "where you have to look and dress a certain way and then say something interesting, these tweeters hold people's attention sitting in their homes. We don't even know what they look like."

Besides its obvious merit, the anonymous Twitter handle is also a great creative opportunity.

No wonder the handles, alter-egos for their owners, are attention magnets themselves.

Such is Ramesh's success that he got elevated from the category of a non-famous category to a Twitter Celebrity- ultimately fetching him the verified account tick mark next to his Twitter handle.

Case Study #5

Satya Paul: When Brands acquire celebrity status

A new dawn is beginning to emerge for brands on twitter. Apart from paying up hefty price tags to digital agencies for their promotion and getting the hashtags to trend, Brands are increasingly going online. Out of the most followed top 300 usernames on Twitter, 237 are real individuals and the remaining 63 accounts were media, companies, and organizations. Therefore, the new ways in which brands are embracing their presence in online is worthy of examination.

Some brands go online because they consider it as a good marketing too, others to utilize it as a complaints addressal forum. And some both. However, Satya Paul establishes an image of the brand by impersonating itself as a fan girl, maybe PR or even an insider who lets out meaningful information to the world of followers. This phenomenon of 'impersonating the brand' is clearly visible from the brand's hashtag- @theSPgirl. It has also been observed in many other brands, most notably iconic ones like Oscar de la Renta- whose Twitter handle is @OscarPRgirl.

An analysis of the tweets showed that the what resembles a fashion circuit in the real world has been almost effortlessly created in the online world too. It is a common practice for the brand to tag user handles of fashion magazines and rave about the ones which might carry the model wearing a SatyaPaul creation on its cover.

Another observation has been the accompaniment of almost every tweet with a picture. This could be seen a marketing tool in keeping with the vibrant image of the brand. The use of mobile clients like Instagram is also practice greatly.

All this shows that Twitter is a brave new world for many brands as they explore how to maximize their efforts, connect with customers and build communities. There are as many different Twitter strategies out there as there are brands, but one thing is consistent in all of them: engagement is the key. In the case of Satya Paul, it helps brands build relationships with their customers, encourage participation from influencers, and foster advocates to amplify their message. And while it's easy to talk about "engagement" and "community building" on Twitter, it's a lot harder to actually do these things. But the sheer brilliance with which Satya Paul has achieved this feat and amassed almost 1.5K+ followers in a brief span is praiseworthy.

It was significant to analyse that if the celebrities are mediated personas and construct a careful image of themselves online, then is there (if at all) any occurrence between the identities- online and offline?

Working on the laid out methodological framework responses both (online & offline) were collected for 3 celebrities Priyanka Chopra, Shashi Tharoor & Shobha De (rejecting Ramesh Srivats & Satya Paul for obvious reasons). The online & offline responses measured the respective identity perceptions using a carefully selected semantic differential scale. The graph below presents the results.

Offline or Online : How do they meet?

- 'Celebrities are mediated personas' (Gamson, 1994)-
- 'Online spaces allows for a carefully constructed image of self' (Marshall, 2006) -
- The popularity of celebrity gossip has increased the public's capacity to 'exercise control' over the processes of celebrityization leading to a New Media Development (Feasey, 2008; Turner, 2004) -

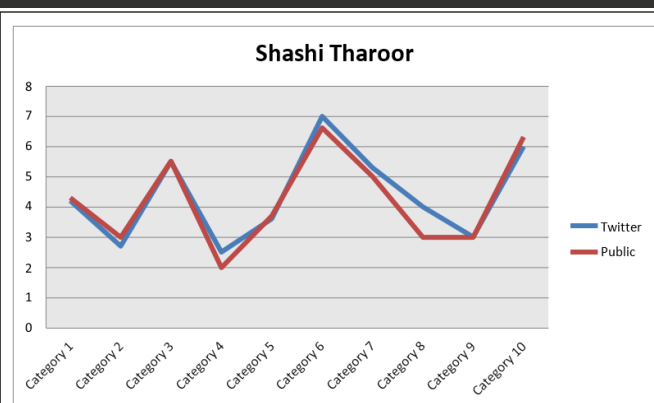


Figure 2: Online & Offline Perception - Shashi Tharoor

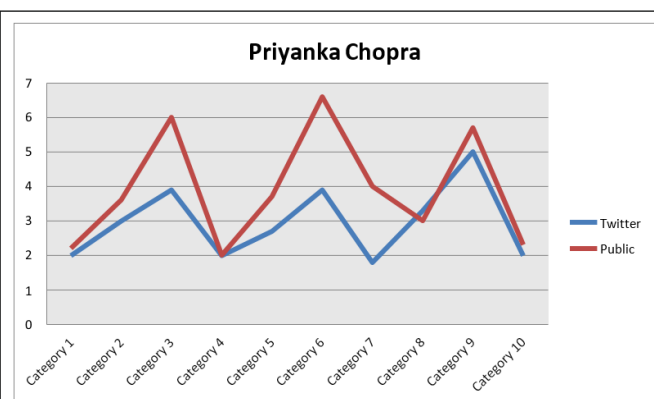


Figure 3: Online & Offline Perception - Priyanka Chopra

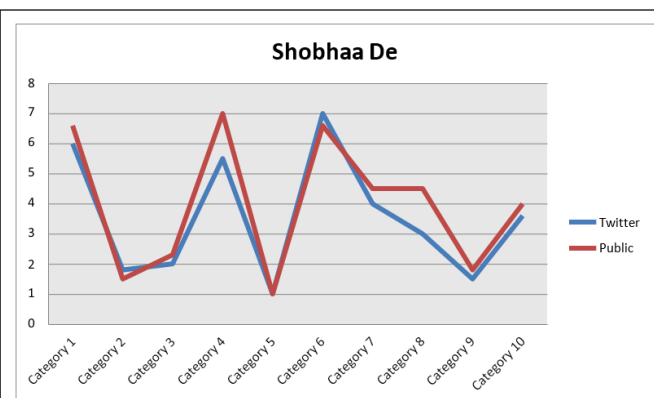


Figure 4: Online & Offline Perception - Shobhaa

The results show that while Shashi Tharoor & Shobha De got near perfect scrolls, Priyanka Chopra's scores showed a slight variation. Nevertheless, the similarities in the trajectories of the graph curves are explicitly visible. Linguistics form the biggest chunk of explanation for this observation.

We all have individual writing styles and habits that build to create a linguistic identity. That's the reason as to why Forensic linguistic experts can penetrate technological anonymity by interrogating the linguistic clues that you leave as you write. Everything from the way someone uses capitalization or personal pronouns, to the words someone typically omits or includes, to a breakdown of average word or sentence length, can help identify the writer of even a short text like a Tweet or text message.

In conclusion, the results clearly suggest that online identity is, if not more, but equally expressive of the individual's offline identity.

Data Presentation & Analysis:

Analyzing Twitter conventions: retweeting, @replies & regular tweets.

It was observed that, every celebrity, used @replies- be it for engagement with fans or fellow men. Also, every celebrity, except Shobhaa De, practices retweeting. Shashi Tharoor uses this practice as extensively as he uses @replies. However, the practice of quoting tweets was seen only in Priyanka Chopra & Ramesh Srivats. While Priyanka quotes a tweet by adding a simple 'haha' or 'nice' or a 'I agree', Ramesh Srivats on the contrary mostly adds full-fledged sentences

to the quoted tweets. Lastly, it was seen that 3 retweets (just three of the entire sample!) – one by Ramesh Srivats & the other two by Priyanka Chopra, embodied an interesting practice- that of adding a user handle to a quoted tweets; thus blurring the distinction between retweeting and tagging someone as an @reply.

Inspecting the authorship of celebrity accounts

0	Shashi Tharoor	Shobhaa De	Priyanka Chopra	Ramesh Srivats	Satya Paul
Self	15	19	8	18	5
Impersonator	4	0	9	3	3
Team	10	1	16	2	15

Not all 'celebrity' accounts are authored by the celebrity in question. To account for this, an analysis was made in an attempt to determine how many were authentic. It is very difficult to determine whether or not an account is authored by its purported owner, an assistant, or someone hired for that purpose. All of the accounts that I considered are verified, which means that either the famous person or their representatives vouch for the account.

While some accounts are clearly identified as written by a team – tweets from the 'Anurag Thakur' account are attributed to Anurag, his manager, and his website – others are written by 'ghost twitterers' in the voice of the celebrity (Cohen, 2009). This is distinct from fan-written or imposter accounts; celebrities hire impersonators for a variety of reasons. Some famous people lack the time or interest to maintain an account but view it as a good marketing tool; some have managers who discourage direct access to fans; and still others are under contract to a team, studio or production which expressly forbids candid tweeting (Wallenstein and Belloni, 2009). From a sample of 5 chosen accounts, I determined that 2 were written solely by individual famous people, 2 by a team (publicists, assistants, and so on), 3 by a team plus the celebrity, and 1 was indeterminate:

- whether the account got a mention in news reports/stories on 'ghost twitterers'
- references to the account by Twitter or other technology scholars
- the proportion of publicity versus personal messages
- the use of first-person voice; the presence of misspellings or grammatical errors
- whether tweets seemed 'safe' (as in vetted by a PR team) or covered controversial or negative topics and so forth
- The applications used to post tweets (noted whether pictures were posted directly from a camera phone to a service like Twitpic or YFrog) and categorized pictures as candid or formal publicity stills. Finally, it was investigated whether the celebrity answered questions or directly corresponded with fans.

INFERENCES & CONCLUSION:

In the first stage of this research work- quite a few interesting findings came to the fore: the notion of teens does not tweet got modified outright; some teens joined twitter for real-time updates on their favorite celebs; some by accident and some by purpose.

Secondly, the professors who developed the OIA theory were guided by the fact that there is no theory in the communication scholarship that concretely addresses the formation of identity in an open space. They were thus unanimous in their call for future study critiquing as well as applying the theory to the other available platforms. This research work, after undertaking a thorough critique of the theory concludes that it conforms to the Twitter platform as effortlessly as it did onto the Facebook platform. The underlying premise, that of identity being a process & not a product is in sync with the research's findings. Moreover, a deep analysis of how celebrities use twitter only exemplifies this premise- and it is seen that 'celebrity' too has undergone radical shift in its definition when considering the online space.

Some scientists note that the popularity of celebrity gossip has increased the public's capacity to 'exercise control' over the processes of celebrityization (Feasey, 2008; Turner, 2004: 20); this process is compounded in online venues where people can contribute content, post comments, or simply view a larger set of opinions than those presented in the mainstream media. Arguably, this 'new media democracy' (Braudy, 1986; Turner, 2004) allows celebrity personas to be constructed and interpreted in an ongoing process that exists between reader, fan, and celebrity, both on and offline has been substantiated by the study.

Entertainers, public figures and technologists actively contribute to the construction of their persona through public interaction with fans. This type of active labor is strikingly similar to that practiced by bloggers, online glamour models, social media gurus, and other people practicing micro-celebrity and has been inferred in this study.

Moreover, celebrity performance of access and affiliation reveals the inner workings of unequal status, making power differentials clear. Responsiveness on Twitter is variable: while Priyanka Chopra may not write back to her fans, a fan will typically write back to her, and Priyanka will typically respond to other celebrities. This type of public recognition marks certain people as more important than others. We see these tensions embodied in people like Shobhaa De, who occupies a liminal space where she is criticized for responding to celebrity practitioners rather than fans. Celebrity is by necessity a co-performance that requires fan deference and mutual recognition of unequal status to succeed. Twitter does, to some extent, bring famous people and fans 'closer' together, but it does not equalize their status. Rather, it reveals that the reasons for power differentials between 'celebrities' and 'non-celebrities' are performative constructs that can be leveraged by anyone with a webcam, social network site profile, or Twitter account for their own uses. But practicing celebrity and having celebrity status are different.

It remains to be seen whether the application of these approaches will construct spaces for different types of celebrities.

New media provides new avenues for the exploration of celebrity, and convolutes the dynamics between celebrity practitioners, their audiences. Interactions between famous people are typically brokered through entertainment media or kept from public view; Twitter allows famous people to make their conversations publicly visible. This requires celebrity practitioners to navigate skillfully the performative friendships, feuds, and negotiations with others, all in front of their fans and the mainstream media. The study of celebrity culture has primarily focused on fans as separate from celebrities, but the ability of famous people to read and reply to fans has given rise to new sets of practices and interactions. Celebrity practitioners must harness this ability to maintain ongoing affiliations and connections with their fans, rather than seem uncaring or unavailable. Thus, from this study it can be concluded that Twitter generates a new kind of intimacy. Instead of handing off fan management to an agent or fan club, celebrity practitioners must expend emotional labor maintaining a network of affective ties with their followers. Thus, even the famous must learn the techniques used by 'regular people' to gain status and attention online.

Twitter demonstrates the transformation of 'celebrity' from a personal quality linked to fame to a set of practices that circulate through modern social media.

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- XXIII. https://twitter.com/wa_status/status/437319926605680640
- XXIV. <https://twitter.com/Richard19Foster/status/390210704642678784>
- XXV. 5 celebrity accounts that were followed are:
- <https://twitter.com/ShashiTharoor>
 - <https://twitter.com/DeShobhaa>
 - <https://twitter.com/priyankachopra>
 - <https://twitter.com/rameshsrivats>
 - <https://twitter.com/TheSPGirl>
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